

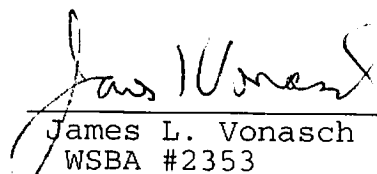
Honorable Marsha Pechman

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	
)	NO. CR04-0494 P
Plaintiff,)	
v.)	
)	RUBEN SHUMPERT'S
RUBEN LUIS LEON SHUMPERT, aka)	WRITTEN STATEMENT
AMIR ABDUL MUHAJMIN,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

Attached hereto is the written statement of the defendant Ruben Luis Shumpert.

DATED this 18th day of ~~June~~^{July}, 2006.


James L. Vonasch
WSBA #2353
Attorney for Defendant
Ruben Luis Shumpert

RUBEN SHUMPERT'S WRITTEN
STATEMENT (CR04-0494 P)

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RECEIVED

JUN 05 2006

MARSHA J. PECHMAN
US DISTRICT JUDGE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of GOD, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

To: The Honorable, Judge Marsha J. Pechman,

My name is Ruben Luis Leon ShumPERT (Amir Abdul Muhaimin), case numbers CR04-0494P and CR04-0495L. My purpose for writing this letter is to accept responsibility for the actions I committed. And to give my account of the surrounding circumstances of each crime. Also, while expressing my account, and just as important, I would like to raise some concerns about civil liberties, religion, the kind of methodology used by our government in the "war on terror," and how it all applies in my case. I pray that you are patient with me through this letter and read it with a heart of understanding.

I will begin my personal account from the time I became Muslim. Although my life has been peppered with substance abuse, crime, and hardships so severe it would have completely destroyed most people, I choose not to explain that part of my life. It neither defines me nor is it a contributing factor to my current situation. Actually, it has become a stigma of sorts that has held me back from making progress in some areas of my life. My previous two attorneys told me the investigation against me would not have went as far as it did if it weren't for my past. For this reason, from the time I accepted Islam as my way of life (Aug. 15, 2002) until present, I have refused to look back and have stayed focused on what's ahead of me.

Not even two weeks after I had been released from Monroe State penitentiary, I had made a commitment to myself that I would NEVER come back to prison, and that by any means I was going to do the right thing. For me, this meant no more drinking to help me through the tough times. No more drug money. No more guns and

violence. Really, it meant no more life as I had always known it. If I was to be sincere in my commitment to live a morally sound life, 24 years of indecency would now be over and I would have to walk an entirely new walk on a path I have never known before. A lifetime of hardship and pain made the decision easy for me. I chose to clean up my life permanently. And so, like many people who desire such a drastic transformation in their life, I sought help from GOD. Unfortunately, when choosing my faith, I did not understand nor foresee the socio-political ramifications of what it means to be a Muslim after September 11TH. With choosing this new Islamic way of life that I hoped would teach me how to be a man and live a righteous life, I was also adopting a current investigation headed by various security agencies as an indirect result of September 11TH. Ignorant to the F. B. I.'s presence in every mosque, I made the mosque my home. Because I refused to go back to a life of crime and fast money I was starting from scratch. So without money or shelter, literally, the mosque became my home. I had made countless attempts to find employment. But again, my past proved to be a hindrance. I figured the only way I would be able to gain employment would be to either work for a small local business or start my own business. It wasn't long before the Muslim community came together to help me get on my feet. One of my Muslim brothers decided to open up a barbershop and let me work in it. In the back of the barbershop was a small storage room. I took a sleeping bag and on the floor of this room is where I slept. Understanding my situation, the Muslim community would make me food and bring it to me. Other times I would eat from the foodbank across the street. Many nights I lay on the storage room floor, alone, questioning myself. Questioning my belief. Why should I subject myself to this? Why should I have to live so poor when I could go back to my old ways? It would be so easy to go back and drive luxury cars and eat at nice

restaurants. Still, staying true to my conviction, I moved ahead.

During this time, not only was I trying to help get the barbershop off the ground, but I would spend every second of my free time trying to learn my religion. I was introduced to many different schools of thought. There were many different approaches to Islam. I am thankful I was exposed to the various opinions and approaches to Islam. It helped me to build a solid understanding and firm foundation in my faith. Amongst the various approaches I was exposed to was what has been called radical Islam, or fundamentalism. I gave this study the same attention and scrutiny that I did to the modernist and pacifists' approach. Ironically, it was the Paid Criminal Informant known as Peter who introduced me to this political approach. Peter would attempt to circulate what would be called radical pamphlets around Muslim establishments. His approach startled some people. Although Peter never came across as violent, he did seem overly critical of domestic and foreign policies in the Bush administration. This argument is nothing new to any of us. I see no real difference between some of what Peter was saying and John Murtha or Rep. Feingold (to name a few). The only real difference was the two separate approaches to liberalism. One being the approach of the Democrats and the other approach being Islam. Aside from Peter's noticeably vocal political stance, he seemed to go out of his way to help me. In essence, we became good friends. Peter would sit with me for hours at the barbershop while I would dialogue with the people of the community on how we can improve our social system. Many young kids, some even belonging to local gangs, would come in the barbershop. Peter and I would always enjoy the opportunity to share our past experiences with them, accompanied with a word of hope and inspiration. A lifestyle of poverty and vice in whatever form, has consumed, and continues to consume so many, that it is rare to find survivors who can come back and deal with the people first-hand who are still imprisoned to that life. I feel I am one of those people.

who can I truly believed the paid criminal informant Peter was too. I loved him. He would help me so much with the people in need at the barbershop. He seemed sincere. This, in essence, was the theme of the barbershop: the pursuit of a strong personal relationship with GOD for a strong spiritual foundation on which to stand, and mobilize from, in life. Then, be able to share this achievement with those who are in need and want help. Please remember the barbershop, what many have called a community center, was in a poor neighborhood riddled with drugs, violence, and gangs.

Before I move on to the actual events that surrounded my crimes, I feel the need to clarify some of the fear that the paid criminal informant Peter induced amongst the F.B.I., alledging the Muslims talked a lot about guns and brandished weapons constantly at the barbershop. YES — there are Muslims who have guns. They are NOT a faction of fanatics seeking to wage holy war with a single pistol. These are law abiding citizens who are licensed owners, no different from any other citizens of our country who legally possess firearms. The F.B.I. did the necessary background checks and investigations on the many "SCARY" Muslims Peter claimed were illegally dealing guns. Praise be to GOD that the truth prevailed and the majority of the Muslims were vindicated of such claims. I would also like to express my own personal opinion about guns. I do not believe a gun kills people. I believe people kill people by the use of guns. So it has been my position to want to address and confront the mentality that would consider committing such an act. This does not make me an N.R.A. activist! I believe there are too many guns on the streets. For as long as I can remember, my community has been plagued with senseless violence surrounding weapons that should have never been on the street. I will not completely dismiss the idea of persons owning weapons, as post 9-11 ignorance has caused continuous backlash on the Muslim community. And out of necessity members of the

community have sought means of protecting themselves. I wish you could understand the hardship of following Islam in this day and age. The fear that Muslims live with in our day-to-day life. So for those who are able and qualify, in some instances, I believe this means of protection is appropriate.

Although Peter was not the informant who induced me to get him a weapon, before any crime was committed, for 2 years, he reported to the F.B.I. that everyone in the barbershop were arming themselves for a standoff with non-Muslims in general, or the government in particular. In either case, this is simply not true. This was the state of affairs for the first 2 years of the investigation — or the first 2 years of me being a Muslim; a lot of extremist rhetoric that was never substantiated. Then Peter found a small window of opportunity he had waited 2 years for

The barbershop had moved locations. The new location was situated right next to the mosque. So it became a sort of hangout for the Muslim community between our 5 daily times of worship. Plus, I occupied seven rooms in the building to house the homeless in the neighborhood. Around this time my wife and I had our first child, Hurreyah (freedom). The pace of life picked up a lot. One day, while several people were in the barbershop, including Peter, one of the clients, a neighborhood kid, taped what appeared to be a hundred dollar bill to my work station, mirror. Naturally, I was shocked and said something to the effect of, "why or why did you do this!" He told me it was a gift for the success of the barbershop. Then he laughed and told me it's not real. All of us were sort of surprised because it looked very real. The other barber wanted to take it down and see it. But I left it on my mirror. At that time, I didn't see any harm. My mind simply did not register it as a crime. Within a day or two Peter began inquiring about the hundred dollar bill. He had asked me to not only buy mine from me, but to also buy more of his own. Initially I denied

him. After a brief period of time and continuous persuasion, regretfully, I agreed to help Peter obtain his own counterfeit money. Even though I verbally agreed to help Peter, despite his persistence and pressure, the single transaction took approximately 3 weeks. This is because many times throughout that 3 week period I had doubts. On one occasion I even gave Peter back his money. My incentive to be the two parties middle man was five hundred dollars. Even as I write it on paper it all seems insane. Please know, as AllAH is my witness, before Peter approached me I had never been involved in counterfeit money. And once the single transaction was over I never touched it again. After I actually did this, I told my wife out of fear and shame. This caused a major stir in our home. Needless to say, I took my wife's advice (orders) and repented to my Lord and completely abstained from the act. Peter continued to persue me to aid his counterfeiting scheme. He offered me outrageously large amounts of money to continue to be his middle man. At one point he told me he had \$10,000 in cash for me and maybe more later. GOD knows, with the financial situation I was in at the time, I could have used the money. But each time I would brush him off. Eventually, he left me alone. It wasn't until after it was all over that I fully realised how serious it all was. At times I felt that my faith was shattered. How could I encourage the youth to persevere in the face of hardship, while I myself just fell to temptation? For a long time, and sometimes still, I feel like the biggest hypocrite.

While all of these events took place I always had one of my closest friends around me. His name is Kamel. He too is a paid criminal informant. He was a very soft spoken man with the best of manners. Out of all of the people that I knew he had the best character. Because he comes from the land that the Prophet Muhammad was born and died in, I looked up to him with great respect. We often ate off of the same plate together. So it weighed very heavy on my heart when Kamel told

me^{He} was receiving threats from some guys around his place of business. His business was in the same neighborhood as my barbershop. Maybe a month before he actually asked me to get him a weapon he was preparing me by informing me about these threats. A month or so later, coincidentally a man is shot and killed right in front of my friend Kamel's business. The very next day Kamel comes to my business to ask me to help him obtain a gun. In my opinion, as the audio transcripts show, he didn't just ask, he begged! My obligation by GOD is to protect innocent life. But initially, I denied him for a couple of reasons. One, I myself did not have a gun to give him. Nor was I in any real position to do so. And second, I was still trying to forgive myself for previously falling into temptation. I simply did not want anymore trouble. But I also knew Islamically I had an obligation to do something for my brother because of the sanctity of his life and well-being. This is why I tried to divert him to every other possible option I could. At one point he even told me that I could not divert him. Finally, after much pressure and an unexpected invocation of GOD on me, I agreed to help him. I figured since there are brothers in the community who are legal gun owners, I could simply have one of them help him without any real problems for myself. Unfortunately, it didn't quite happen that way. Although the gun did come from a legal owner, I ended up being the one who drove it to Kamel. To some degree, this was a major moral dilemma for me. On one hand I know it is a crime for me to own or possess a weapon. While on the other hand I was put in a situation to help save an innocent life. My best friend's life. Should I help him or not? To help him would mean I commit a crime. To not help him is to commit a sin before GOD. Compelled in my understanding of GOD and religion, I chose to help him. Since I've been arrested I have sent many letters to the people of my community to get their insight on what I should have done. Amazingly, the feedback was generally the same: that most Muslims under the same circumstances

would have fallen into the same trap. Because my religion was used for me to obtain a weapon for Kamel, it has caused me to look deep into my religion to see if this is correct. Without going into the many details of Islamic jurisprudence, it is not! This is a lesson I really needed to learn. For whatever it is worth, despite Kamel's inducement, I never had any intention of owning or possessing a gun. Pre-Islam, carrying a gun was always my way of life. Every crime I had ever committed surrounded a gun in one way or another. But when I was released from prison August 6, 2002 and became Muslim August 15th, for the first time in my life all of that changed. This is obvious from the transcripts of the wire-taps, when Kamel told me the gun would be his "protection", and I told him the best "protection" is GOD. Would a gun toting thug say this to his best friend in need?

Finally, I would like to express a few concerns I have pertaining to the government's investigation. It is clear that we are all at war with extremism. I say "we" because the Muslim community is also at war with these radical elements hiding in our religion. I need you and everyone else to understand that it is actually us Muslims that are at the forefront of this fight. Why? Not just because these acts of terror are a tremendous crime against humanity. But because every Muslim has to carry the burden of these few ignorant, even though we have nothing to do with it. I can't count how many times I've been called 'Usama bin Laden'. Or my wife has been told it looks like she's going to blow up. Look at Iraq. Nineteen extremists kill over 3,000 Americans on 9-11, and over 30,000 Iraqis are killed as an indirect result. There are so many examples. The point I'm trying to make is the extremist commits an act of terror and the Muslim community always pays the price. So, many of us, in many different ways, have joined the fight against this evil ideology. In my own little way, I have also. I have attempted to understand the rationale and reasoning of these

militants. What I have found is they attempt to find justification for their acts in Islamic legislation. They then feed this poison to the ignorant and oppressed. So what is the only way to counteract ignorance :

EDUCATION. And this is exactly what we would do at the barbershop.

Why hide the obvious ? With so many occurrences of suicide and other incidences of terror going on around the world, many Muslims ignorant of their religion are beginning to question if these acts are sanctioned by Islam. So what I have done is present the militants case, video footage, audio, etc. And then present the Islamic verdict by the consensus of Muslim jurists' around the world. I liken my struggle at the barbershop to a movie I once saw called Remember The Titans, starring Denzel Washington. He played a football coach who was in charge of a team torn between a strong black and white division. The whole team was divided. But how did he overcome this seemingly impossible obstacle ? By bringing the issue right out in the open for everyone to see and attacking this ignorance head on ! Because of his efforts, that football team went undefeated that year and a whole town confronted its racism and overcame it. When I attempted to do the same thing, paid criminal informants told the F.B.I. I was an extremist and for almost three years sought out a way to lock me up. WHY ? The F.B.I. had to have known of the churches and synagogues that I attended to have interfaith dialogue for interfaith understanding. Surely they saw at least one of the hundreds of pamphlets I openly passed out in hopes of refuting terrorist. They had to have known of the schools I went to, to work with troubled youth. Or what of the food and clothing drives I would do on the weekends ? Or the shelter, etc., etc. I might not be so bitter if I was a part of a criminal enterprise. But I wasn't ! I was a man doing right by myself, family, and society on a whole. I was very outspoken in my community on the exact issues that started this investigation. No one else was. Everyone else felt if they addressed

"JIHAD" in any way, they would come under attack from the government. My position was if we don't address "JIHAD", which means Striving and not Holy War, we are leaving our people to be taught by the very extremist we oppose. I worked so hard to establish bridges between the Muslims and non-Muslims. I wanted to finally open up the doors of the mosque and establish trust between both communities. What do you really think happened to those bridges when our community found out the F.B.I. paid convicted felons large amounts of money to live amongst us and spy on us? To lie on us. To make outrageous claims of terrorism. Right before my arrest the barbershop promoted an open forum so Muslims could vote. Jim McDermott came out to talk to us. I spent countless hours convincing the Muslims that we have nothing to fear. That voting is our right and responsibility. After my arrest some of the Muslims took the opinions of the radicals and personally told me that we (Muslims) are all under attack and we have no place in this country. Does this not echo 'Usama bin Laden's recent speeches that the west is waging war on the Muslims and the religion of Islam? Since my arrest, many Muslims have left America. The tactics the F.B.I. employed to arrest all 15 of us has left our whole community with a bitter taste of distrust and a sense of resentment. WHY?

It does not appear this "WAR" will be ending any time soon. So I assume there will be many more cases like mine before you. I hope eventually the government will see the need for greater oversight in such cases. Profiling, as I understand it, is not legal in any way. There are so many cases of alleged terrorist found in this country that quietly and conveniently disappear from the media once it was proven untrue. There are currently three cases that I know of around the country that have turned out just like mine. We Muslims, the supposed terrorists, are initially paraded through media outlets like C.N.N. or FOX News and people like Bill O'Reilly or Rush Limbaugh have a political field day with

us. Another victory for the neo-conservative. And more fear for the American public. But then what? Are our faces ever brought back up on national media to show we are not terrorist? Has there ever been any stories that show how these sort of F.B.I. investigations have torn apart whole communities with false allegations and entrapment? I ask you please, don't let them throw us away in the system so easily. Sadly enough to say, there is a faction on the right that would assume to lock us all up and throw away the key. I listen to a lot of talk radio. I've heard it. If this extremist mentality prevails, I promise you, we all loose. I pray that we are all protected from this.

Soon I will stand in front of you to be sentenced. I could mention the kind of relationship I have with my family and friends in hope to receive sympathy. But I won't. I ask you to consider who I have been my whole life, compared to who I have finally become. I went from selling drugs, to giving my own bed and food to people trying to kick their drug habit. I went from forcefully taking from people, to quietly giving to people. My whole life the concepts of right or wrong never mattered much to me. Now many families send their children to me to receive morals and ethics. Even now that I'm locked up. I don't want to sound boastful or proud. But for the first time in my life I am happy with who I am. For the first time in my life I am doing right. Sure, maybe I did fall this time. But all babies fall when they first learn to walk (especially if they're pushed!). I only ask that you judge me as the man writing this letter, Amir Abdul-Muhaimin. And not who I used to be, Ruben L. Shumpert. These are two different people with two different lives. Although I committed a crime (with reluctance). I am NOT a criminal. Ruben Shumpert was a criminal by trade, who would not have shown any reluctance. Ruben Shumpert would have readily supplied any and everyone with counterfeit money if he could. Amir Abdul-Muhaimin prayed with his wife to GOD for forgiveness for

passing it one time between two people. Ruben Shumpert has always had large amounts of weapons, in which he committed numerous crimes with. Amir Abdul-Muhaimin attempted to talk his best friend out of obtaining a gun, asking him to depend on COD for protection. It is hard for me to express with words what I have been through in my life and what I have now become. Somehow, I hope that you can see it. Or maybe even feel it. I ask you to please end all of this. Let me go back to my family and community. Go back to beginning my life. Go back to a sense of normality. The first normality I have ever known.

Sincerely,

أمير عبدك مقيم

Amir Abdul Muhaimin